Indications for Surgery

• Size
  • Pressure
  • Pain
  • Difficulty Swallowing
  • Difficulty Breathing
• Nodule with Cancer or Suspicion of Cancer
  • Cold on thyroid scan
  • Solid vs. Cystic
  • Enlarging
  • History of irradiation
  • Family history of medullary carcinoma or multiple endocrine neoplasm syndrome
  • Abnormal FNA results
• Hyperthyroidism

Types of Cancer

• Papillary
• Follicular
• Medullary
• Anaplastic

Complications & Risks 3-5%

General
• Blood clots (DVT/PE)
• Pneumonia
• Heart attack
• Stroke
• Bleeding
• Infection

Specific
• Recurrent Laryngeal Nerve injury-hoarseness
• Parathyroid injury-hypocalcemia (numbness, tingling, cramps)
• Need for lifelong calcium supplements
• Local recurrence or metastasis if cancer

Alternatives

• Observation and close follow-up
• Fine needle aspiration biopsy
• Radiodine ablation
• Excision

Thyroid cartilage (Adam’s apple)

Four parathyroid glands regulate the amount of calcium in the blood. These glands sit close to the underside of the thyroid gland.